is US $ -2423 million as per the latest data. The items-wise details are as follows: rvalue in US $ Million)

	1999-2000 (April-June)
Exports	8148
Imports	12282
Trade Balance	-4134
Invisibles (net)	1711
Non factor services	-278
Investment income	-811
Private transfers	2743
Official grants	57
Current account balance	-2423

(b) to (d) As per DGCI&S provisional data, the trade deficit has been estimated at US $ 5796 million for the period April-October, 1999-2000. The trade deficit is the excess of imports over exports. A large proportion of our imports such as oil, capital goods, raw materials, etc. are necessary to sustain the growth of the economy. The steps to improve the balance of trade position include initiatives for attaining a high growth of exports and attracting capital flows in the form of foreign investments. The process of liberalisation has been carried forward with the changes introduced in the Exim Policy 1997—2002 and the focus is on improving the export competitiveness and minimising the transaction costs and delays faced by exporters. Services exports have been brought in the ambit of Exim Policy.

Decline in Export of Rice and Cotton

†*314. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export of rice and cotton from the country has continuously been declining in comparison to the past years;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if not, the quantity of export of the above articles during the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99;

(c) what was the value of the said articles;

(d) the reasons for decrease, if any; and

(e) the target fixed by Government for export of each of the above articles during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) The total quantity and value of exports of rice during the last 3 years is as under:—

Quantity : lakh metric tonnes Value : in Rs. Crores

Year	Basmati Rice		Non-Basmati Rice	
(April-March)	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
1996-97 1997- (P)	5.23	1247.64	19.89	1924.72
98 1998-99(P)	5.93	1685.62	17.96	1685.38
Apr-Aug, 99	6.01	1866.25	43.40	4334.55
Apr-Aug, 98	2.01	641.03	4.67	499.85
	2.69	807.46	13.72	1346.26

(SOURCE: DGCI&S, Calcutta)

The total quantity and value of export of cotton during the last 3 years (cotton year w.e.f. Oct.-September) is as under:—

Year	Qty. (in lakh bales of 170 kg each)	Value (in Rs. Crores)
1996-97 (as on 27.10 .99)	16.82	1655.00
1997-98	3.4973	316.85
1998-99	0.98720	83.60

(SOURCE: Office of Textile Commissioner, Bombay)

(d) The exports of rice would depend upon International demand and supply position, domestic demand and supply, international and

domestic prices, consumer preferences, and varieties traded. Low international demand and better crop production in rice consuming countries has led to the reduction in rice exports from India during the current financial year. Decline in export of cotton is due to the fact that the domestic prices of *kapas* are higher as compared to international prices.

(f) Targets fixed for exports of rice and cotton are as under:—

Year	Rice (US $ Million)	Quantity of Cotton in lakh bales (of 170 Kg each) released for exports
1996-97	706	14.42
1997-98	676	8.2 5.0
1998-99	1057	5.0
1999-2000	1035	

Rice targets are for the period April-March. Cotton released for exports is for the period October-September.

Recovery of Dues from Senior Politicians

*315. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a suo moto action, the Delhi High Court has directed Government to initiate immediate necessary action for recovery of dues from senior politicians, including former Prime Ministers, who had been allotted accommodation beyond their entitled category;

(b) whether the Court has further restrained Government from making any such allotment in future without bringing it to the notice of the court; and

(c) if so, what follow-up action is proposed to give effect to this directive?